

Do cultural differences affect training or have all analysts, across cultures, been trained equally since 1920?¹

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The aim of this panel was to present preliminary results drawn from 252 email surveys and 94 interviews with candidates in psychoanalytic training in the three regions of the IPA, part of a continuing research project, ‘International Perspective on Psychoanalytic Training and Local Institutional Culture.’² This project is among the first studies done by candidates concerning international psychoanalytic training experiences.

The Principal Investigator of the research is Andrea R. Q. de Pereira, and the Co-investigators who participated in this presentation are María Rita Ragau, and Laura Borensztein (Pereira et al., 2004). The object of the study was to contribute to psychoanalytic education by providing an international database from which to explore and compare candidates’ opinions about educational policies and experiences in seminars, supervision, and training analysis. An area of particular interest for the investigators was the impact of social reality—expressed in the forms of local culture and training institution culture—on the mindset of candidates.

Susana Muszkat, President of IPSO, introduced the panel. Placing the research in an historical context, María Rita Ragau noted that Max Eitingon’s tripartite model of psychoanalytic education became compulsory for candidates in 1925. As King (1994) records, by 1927, Eitingon, then President of the IPA, reported that, in the large societies of Berlin, London and Vienna, training was actually being done along similar lines. However, there were certain differences of emphasis in psychoanalytic theory, and these differences evolved into the famous Anna Freud/Melanie Klein Controversial Discussions that stimulated intense affect and heated debate in the British Psycho-Analytical Society and in the IPA at that time.

Recently, communications from both the President-Elect and the Secretary of the IPA indicate that controversy and passion about issues of analytic education continue to exist. Cláudio Laks Eizirik, Porto Alegre, wrote that there is a general

¹Panel held at the 44th Congress of the International Psychoanalytical Association, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 28 July 2005. Panelists: Andrea R. Q. de Pereira (Buenos Aires), María Rita Ragau (Buenos Aires), Laura Borensztein (Buenos Aires) Discussant: Mary Target (London).

²Mentor: Peter Fonagy; Supervisors: Janine Puget, Adela Leibovich de Duarte; Principal Investigator: Andrea R. Q. de Pereira; Co- Investigators: María Rita Ragau, Silvia Jadur, Ariel Liberman, Lee Jaffe, Laura Borensztein; Data Analysis Consultant: Andrés Roussos; Fiscal and Administrative Authority: Asociación Psicoanalítica de Buenos Aires; First Phase: funded by IPSO; Second Phase: funded by IPSO and by the IPA Research Advisory Board.

consensus about the need to maintain and protect a high level of training, but there is also an active debate concerning standards, criteria and models (2005). He suggested that immediate research is needed concerning the effectiveness of our various training models. Donald Campbell, London, reminded us that the Eitingon model never achieved its purpose of homogenizing psychoanalytic education, and that there have been no systematic studies of our educational methods or the outcomes of differing methodologies (2005). From needed research findings concerning optimal training experiences, Campbell stated, knowledge-based recommendations could be made about what constitutes a central cohesive core of psychoanalytic identity, at the same time allowing for some degree of regional and philosophical difference and adaptation.

Although the Eitingon model prevails in many IPA institutes today, it is no longer held universally and *in toto*. The research presented in this panel addresses ongoing international concerns about psychoanalytic education by providing contemporary data about candidates' training experiences from their own point of view. The research questions concerned interregional comparison of candidates' experiences of their training in psychoanalysis and consideration of the extent to which local culture exerted an influence on candidates' professional and sociocultural subjectivity.

Laura Borensztein described the two studies. She discussed the candidates' responses to questions concerning 'institutional culture,' by which was meant the actions, attitudes, beliefs and values of psychoanalysts and training organizations, and the influence of this culture on analysts-in-training. Borensztein also presented results concerning the impact of 'local culture'—that is, the actions, attitudes, beliefs and values held by friends, family and local social institutions—on the candidates' mindset. In addition, she talked about the studies' inquiry into the candidates' thoughts about the future prospects of psychoanalysis.

Andrea Pereira concluded the presentation with a summary of interesting research results. Since local institutional culture, such as predominant theoretical orientation, strongly influences the selection of candidates' readings and, ultimately, their identifications, the researchers felt that candidates could benefit from critical comparative reading and teaching of different schools of psychoanalytic theory. In addition, Pereira recommended that further research is needed concerning local cultural issues such as religious beliefs or attitudes about money. She thought it was a noteworthy contradiction that, while candidates, as a whole, had no objection to Eitingon's tripartite model, they felt that change was necessary for psychoanalysis to survive as a profession; few, however, were aware that their active role in institutional life was needed to foster the changes they sought. She ended by asking, 'Do institutes train their candidates to commit themselves to play a leading role in changing the future of psychoanalysis?'

The discussant, Mary Target, congratulated the research team for this significant study. She noted that this research—done by and with candidates—is especially important because the recent literature concerning psychoanalytic training has been written by senior analysts who have not drawn on the opinions, thoughts or concerns of the candidates themselves.

Target asked the question: 'Should we be worried about training?' She was interested in the finding that the majority of the interviewees idealized their training experiences. Target felt that this in itself indicated a problem, since the uncritical attitude of candidates would curtail future critical examination of psychoanalytic institutional methods.

Target noted an interesting finding from her own studies and discussion groups in Europe: The most common slip made in discussions among training analysts about candidates in classes or in supervision with them was to refer to them as 'patients.' She felt that this parapraxis spoke to the therapeutic mission of training analysts who, in the course of providing training for candidates, may also express a powerful but essentially benign parental wish to transmit one's 'professional genes' to future generations of analysts.

Target thought the data presented in this panel suggested that, although our current system may be infantilizing of candidates and fostering of idealization, it is not a bad educational system. She noted that the data showed areas in which candidates felt free to express some negative views: Many expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the teaching skills of their instructors, while nearly half dissented from their supervisors with regard to clinical practice.

Discussion from the floor was very lively. Thomas Bartlett, Philadelphia, wondered why candidates have accepted diminished expectations of their instructors. Rene Epstein, Buenos Aires, suggested that the hierarchy that evokes passivity in candidates also operates in the society as a whole. Majlis Winberg Salomonsson, Stockholm, thought that we should be worried both about training and about candidates' identifications with their psychoanalytic societies. As a result, she stated, we need to continue these studies over time in order to obtain the full richness of the data. David Scharff, Chevy Chase, noted that many candidates found group dynamics in seminars worrisome; he added that group dynamics was one realm in which institutional difficulty becomes evident. Scharff noted that a substantial number of candidates reported being unhappy with the clinical skills of their training analysts and he felt that this, too, was concerning. Ron Spielman, Sydney, asserted the importance of accounting for the impact of regressive phenomena evoked by training analyses on data obtained from candidates. Along those lines, Stephanie Smith, Boston, spoke to the complexity of teaching psychoanalysis to people who are themselves being psychoanalyzed. Hector Ferrari, Buenos Aires, noted that the researchers, once candidates, had now become members of their societies and he wondered whether that had changed the way they saw the results of their study.

Pereira agreed with Bartlett that the data indicated that some candidates did not expect much from their seminars. In response to the comments by Spielman, Pereira asserted that researching the candidates' opinions and thoughts is new, whereas attributing candidates' opinions about their training experiences to unconscious, regressive factors has already been explored. Target and Spielman agreed that the tripartite model of education should be kept, however, Target added, with more separation of the three parts. Expanding on this idea, Pedro Boschan, Buenos Aires, mentioned the new experimental training model in Buenos Aires, in which the Institute is part of the University. Peter Fonagy, London, stated humorously

that psychoanalysts teaching at university had to prepare their lectures, not just ‘be themselves,’ and that they also needed to respect themselves as teachers. Boschan tendered the hope that psychoanalytic institutions could combine academic and psychoanalytic qualities.

In conclusion, the panel provided an exciting opportunity to learn about research conducted by and with candidates concerning their experiences in psychoanalytic training, and an opportunity to consider the discussant’s question: Should we be worried about psychoanalytic training?

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